

opposite extreme, and we have the Quakers who discard all external forms, even those which the Bible plainly teaches. In another direction, the Wesleyan protest against the spiritual deadness of the Anglican church swept the great preacher and his followers into the wildest extremes of Holy Spirit fanaticism. (I do not desire that this remark shall be construed as a denial of the office, or imminence, or power of the Holy Spirit. I regret very much that our dear Brother Wampler undertook to limit the Holy One of Israel. His position is not wholly in accord, either with the teachings of God's word, or universal Christian experience.)

So we see, brethren, in the light of these historical parallels, how the intense feeling against Annual Meetingism naturally impelled the organizers of the Brethren church to rush to the opposite extreme of incoherent congregationalism, the logical result of which is weakness, confusion and final disintegration. The writer is in a position to know that these very things deterred thousands upon thousands of intelligent German Baptists from following the Progressive movement in its earlier stages, until they were finally discouraged at the prospect of a church home where everyone appeared to be at liberty to do, and say, and preach what was right in his own eyes, and they therefore turned back to work out what reforms they could in the old fold, so as to make it ecclesiastically more tolerable.

It was a vivid sense of these facts that induced the writer to prepare, and present to the first Warsaw Conference, the plan of organization which stirred up the pure minds of the brethren on that occasion. Those who were there need not be told that it touched a vital spot in the consciousness of the church. The powerful support which it commanded, being very nearly half, and permit me to say the more progressive half of the large delegation present, was proof that it appealed to a vital need, that it poured into a serious void, in the policy of the church, a need and a void which will never be satisfied until the Brethren church becomes as scriptural in its union, its solidarity, its cohesion, as it is in doctrine.

There was not a single essential line in that paper which touched upon scriptural congregationalism; nevertheless I quite agree with brother Harvey Lichty that the whole matter should be referred to a competent commission which would be empowered to formulate a plan of organization, and present it to the several districts for discussion and adoption. This commission should be a large one, embracing the best and ablest men of every

district. Finally, brethren, let us pray that the present convention will at least take no backward step. Let the good work go on. Have faith in God. Rest in the confidence that he is running things. In the same confidence, WORK. May His blessing and grace, yea, and his Holy Spirit, too, despite Brother Wampler's theory, abundantly rest upon the conference. Amen.

"SO THAT."—Acts 20:24.

C. H. BALSBAUGH.

Beloved Brother:—Your letter is like an inundation from the Crystal River. You have surely learned the secret of I John 2:20, 27. Truth is not truth in the Divine sense, till it is life, deeper than reason, purpose, and act. While others are theorizing, faith embraces Christ, and lives the life of God. The words, "*not before God*," in Rom. 4:2, give the evangelical exposition of James 2:21. To mistake the expressive form of justification, for the radical and primary, has been the stereotyped defalcation of the church, through the Levitical and Christian dispensations. It has been the crowning error from the first century till now. To deny it is either ignorant or perversion of history. If it were possible for any soul to be justified by works in the fundamental sense, the Incarnation and Atonement of Jesus Christ would be sheer supererogation. The one necessity that brought Jesus in the flesh was the impossibility of justification by works. We must not make James such an ignoramus as to construe his epistle into a contradiction of the very heart and essence of Christianity. To bid anyone to work before the communication of life, is preposterous. And there is but *one* life out of which Christian activity can proceed—viz., the life of God in "*The Man Christ Jesus*." It would be an absurd Gospel indeed, that would ask us to do this or that in order that we may live. Obedience to ordinances is not evidence *per se*, that we are Christians. The symbol is indeed beautiful and comprehensive, but it takes "*Christ in us, the hope of glory*," to make it a living reality. The pre-natal completeness of life in all its essential elements, gets no addition by the post-natal activities demanded by the manifold obligations of our Maker. The dependence of embryonic life, as intimated by some one in a former number of the EVANGELIST, is not a whit greater than that which inheres in humanity in all its stages. The difference is in form. This is not the cardinal matter. Life is the deepest of all facts, and that never goes in halves. It does go in infinitesimals,

but each germ holds all the properties of future development. Begotten of God is the whole of God, and leads to every degree and form of expression incident to the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. The entire epistle to the Hebrews evinces that *LIFE will out*, and that works demonstrate life. "Without faith it is impossible to please God," no matter how loyal we are to divinely instituted ceremonies. To ignore works because we are saved by grace, is fatal antinomianism. To attach salvation to works save as the manifestation of the righteousness of God imputed to faith, is fatal legalism. The blood of Christ saves, and only that. The spirit applies this, and only by faith. The Holy Ghost *cannot*, in the necessary order of the Divine Economy, *touch* the soul save through this medium. "*The blood is the life*." With *this* the Holy Spirit *starts*, and works out all the transformations of human life.

RECEIVING CHURCH FUNDS.

Some weeks ago one of the popular churches in Philadelphia conceived the idea of hiring, for a fixed sum, forty trolley streetcars for one evening, with the understanding that she might work up an excursion for that evening, and reap the benefits. The plan worked like a charm. The cars were crowded from early till late. It was all for the glory (?) of God. The church was in the streetcar business, and, for the time being, religion was laid aside. The excursioners shouted, yelled and screamed. Some of the strangers on the streets wondered where the police were. But they knew that the church was turned over to the world for that one evening, and did not deem it proper to molest the noisy proceedings. The church was making ten cents a head on the people. She was driving a sharp game, and the Lord's (?) cause was getting all the money. Well, what do our readers think of such nonsense? It is worse than nonsense. It is sin. It is worse than worldly people would think of doing. It is to be hoped that the time will never come when the Brethren will resort to any of the questionable ways of raising money to carry on the Lord's work. Whenever a church becomes so lukewarm and worldly-minded that appeals must be made to the carnal desires of the members in order to raise the needed means to support the Gospel, it is time for that church to repent, return to her first love, and start anew in the Master's service.—*Gospel Messenger*.

"It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise than for a man to hear the song of fools."